

VII. COMMENTS AND COORDINATION

VII.A SCOPING

On March 3, 1994, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) published a Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Macomb Bypass. The notice said that the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) did not plan to hold a formal agency scoping meeting. The notice indicated that a scoping information packet describing the project was available. The IDOT received no requests for the scoping packet. The IDOT received no letters from local, state, or federal agencies in response to the Notice of Intent. The Notice of Intent and the scoping packet are included in Appendix A.

VII.B COOPERATING AGENCIES

Four agencies asked to participate in the environmental impact assessment process as cooperating agencies. These agencies are the US Army Corps of Engineers, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and the Illinois Department of Agriculture. A cooperating agency is a federal or state agency that has jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to any environmental impact involved in a proposal for a major federal action, such as the Macomb Bypass. The US Environmental Protection Agency declined to be a cooperating agency. Appendix A includes correspondence from these five agencies responding to the offer to be a cooperating agency.

VII.C STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCY COORDINATION

Between 1995 and 2003, the IDOT held the following meetings with State and Federal agencies:

| Date | Participants | Purpose | Results |
|--|--|---|--|
| • August 22, 1995 | Illinois Department of Agriculture | Discuss the merits of potential alignment alternatives northwest, northeast, and south of Macomb. | The IDOA representative indicated several preferences from the agricultural impact perspective. |
| • April 30, 1996 National Environmental Policy Act/Section 404 Merger Meeting | Federal Highway Administration, US Environmental Protection Agency, US Army Corps of Engineers, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and Illinois Environmental Protection Agency | Discuss project purpose and need, review alternatives, and decide which alternatives should be studied further. | Agreement on the purpose and need for the project and alternatives to carry forward for further evaluation. (See Section III.B.3.) |

| Date | Participants | Purpose | Results |
|---|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> October 30, 1997 | Illinois Department of Agriculture | Discuss the merits of potential alignment alternatives northwest, northeast, and south of Macomb. | The IDOA representative indicated several preferences from the agricultural impact perspective. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> September 25, 1998 National Environmental Policy Act/Section 404 Merger Meeting | Federal Highway Administration, US Environmental Protection Agency, US Army Corps of Engineers, and Illinois Department of Natural Resources | Discuss the merits of potential alignment alternatives northwest, northeast, and south of Macomb. | 1998 agreement on alternative to evaluate in detail in the DEIS. (See Section III.B.3.) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> April 19, 1999 | Illinois Department of Agriculture and the Farm Bureau | Discuss the merits of the alignments agreed to at the September 25, 1998 meeting and potential refinements to those alignments. | The IDOA representative indicated several preferences from the agricultural impact perspective. (See Section III.B.3.) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> April 28, 2003 National Environmental Policy Act/Section 404 Merger Meeting | Federal Highway Administration, US Environmental Protection Agency, and Illinois Department of Natural Resources (the US Army Corps of Engineers was briefed at a meeting on April 25) | Discuss the merits of revisions to the alternative selected for detailed evaluation in the DEIS in 1998. | Revised agreement on alternative to evaluate in detail in the DEIS. (See Section III.B.3.) |

Appendix A presents minutes and letters associated with these meetings, as well as a coordination letter from the IDOT's Division of Aeronautics regarding the clear zone at Smith Airfield.

VII.D LOCAL OFFICIALS COORDINATION

The IDOT also held several meetings with local officials. These meetings were:

- January 27, 1993 with representatives from the City of Macomb.
- July 16 to 18, 1997 (six meetings) with legislative representatives, City of Macomb officials, Macomb Chamber of Commerce representatives, Western Illinois University officials, other local mayors, county engineers, and township officials to introduce the project.

- August 5, 1997 with the Mayor of Quincy, the Quincy Highway Committee, and legislative representatives to discuss alternatives, including dropping potential alignments near Springview Road, and origin and destination study results.
- September 16, 1997 with McDonough County and township officials to discuss alternatives, including dropping potential alignments near Springview Road.
- January 15, 1998 with the Macomb Transportation Committee and the City of Macomb to discuss alignment study results and Macomb's transportation priorities.
- March 6, 1998 with the Mayor of Macomb and three others representing the city to discuss origin and destination study results, freeway versus expressway designation, local road system impacts that could be associated with the different bypass corridors, and traffic noise.
- March 12, 1998 with the Macomb Chamber of Commerce representatives to discuss origin and destination study results, freeway versus expressway designation, and local road system impacts that could be associated with the different bypass corridors.

Appendix A contains the minutes and the list of attendees of those meetings plus a letter from the Sierra Club to the IDOT and two letters sent to local officials by the IDOT to introduce them to the proposed project. Appendix A also includes a letter confirming the Macomb City Council's preference for a freeway over an expressway. It also includes meeting minutes of the Macomb City Council (July 28, 1998) and the McDonough County Board (July 15, 1998) indicating their preference for a bypass northwest of the City of Macomb rather than one south of the city.

VII.E PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The IDOT held two public information meetings, November 5/6, 1997 and April 28, 1999. Appendix A includes the following information related to public involvement activities: the newspaper ads advertising the meetings; copies of the handouts given to attendees; a summary of the November meeting comments; and correspondence between the IDOT and the public that followed meetings with the public. The appendix presents the correspondence in chronological order except that all letters from IDOT in response to citizen letter follows the citizen letter regardless of the date.

The November 1997 meetings were attended by 310 persons. At the meetings, there was considerable discussion regarding the predominantly hilly terrain west and northwest of Macomb and the flatter terrain that lies to the northeast, east and south, and the potential impacts associated with traversing either type of terrain. Residents raised concerns about noise and expressed concerns about environmental impacts. Residents also provided a considerable amount of oral history of the Macomb area. Persons commenting noted that a bypass south of Macomb would likely increase traffic on CH 16.

Approximately 74 people attended the April 1999 meeting. After the meeting, 16 individuals submitted additional comments. All comments received expressed concern with alignments within the Northwest Corridor. Primary concerns were the severance of agricultural areas, affects to natural habitats, and affects to residences near the alignments. The IDOT responded to the comments (see Appendix A) and considered them in additional alternative evaluations and the selection of the proposed alignment.

Appendix A also includes minutes of meetings with area property owners held on March 12 and April 8, 1998. Approximately 61 people from the Hidden Hills and Scotland Glen Subdivisions

attended the March 12, 1998 meeting to discuss the project's potential impacts to their subdivisions. Approximately 68 people from the Georgetown Subdivision attended the April 8, 1998 meeting to discuss the project's potential impacts to their subdivision.